



## KENTUCKY COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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**John J. Johnson**  
Executive Director

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Greetings!

As we acknowledge 50 years since the creation of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights, I take this time to warmly welcome all participants and attendees to the 2010 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Kentucky Human and Civil Rights Conference. We are proud of having a half-century record of being a protector of civil rights, a voice for equality, and a catalyst for positive change. The purpose of the Commission's conference is to bring together scholars, researchers, public officials, community leaders and interested citizens to create solution-focused dialogue and work together on ways to promote a more equitable Kentucky.

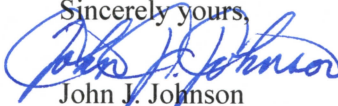
The work of the commission is governed by both state and federal civil rights laws based on our contract agreements with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In addition to civil rights enforcement, our mandate includes educating the public as well as securing the state against domestic strife and unrest that, in the past, has been the inevitable result of systemic inequality. By ensuring that citizens of Kentucky are able to exercise their civil rights, we demonstrate that we have a Commonwealth that cultivates and highlights our strengths, identifies and acts on our weaknesses, and invites and explores the challenges that come with the tapestry of diversity.

There has been significant progress in Kentucky's stride toward equality, however, there remains much work to be done. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has not magically slowed the need to press for change in inequities. Blatant disparities continue to exist in a number of areas. We want the conference workshops and discussions to re-energize, re-focus and re-connect our partners, supporters and fellow Kentuckians in a serious examination of the many faces of discrimination resulting in an outcome of workable solutions. We, the people, must ensure that progress is made. And we, the board and staff of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights, must ensure that the progress made does not take a backward turn. The battles that cannot be fought alone can be courageously won when we work together.

Space does not permit me to recognize all of the dedicated champions, heroes, activists and supporters who are ultimately responsible for Kentucky's advancements in civil rights. Though words cannot express the full measure of the positive impact of their labor, I here offer heartfelt thanks on behalf of all Kentuckians to our past and present governors, legislators, commission board members and staff, and to the general public for continuing to support this work that ensures equality for all.

Thank you for attending the conference and contributing your voice. We all have the capacity to give and to make contributions to others during our lives. I hope each of you will take advantage of this opportunity to learn, share, make new connections and bring new energy to your own area of civil and human rights work.

Sincerely yours,

  
John J. Johnson  
Executive Director